

# Partners in Stewardship

## Suarez Focuses On Heritage



Broadcast journalist Ray Suarez autographs copies of his book after morning keynote address.

Ray Suarez, senior correspondent for "The News Hour" on public television, focused on the emerging immigration and youth patterns for public land managers in the keynote address on Wednesday. "We are at the edge, the entrance, of a place we've never been before . . . a large and growing population, an affluent, mobile population . . . a population that will retire tens of millions of boomers in the coming two decades, and will welcome tens of millions of new Americans into the national life," suggesting that this unprecedented demographic challenge will be borne by public agencies across the country.

Suarez, who later signed copies of his new book *The Old Neighborhood*, talked about immigrants understanding the rugged beauty of the outdoors, but remembering it as places of struggle and privation. "We've been here before, and those newcomers who are enduring the tough transition people went through a

century ago when the parks were young will be your customers too." Suarez spoke of the uniquely American gift of assimilation and culturalization, challenging participants not to wait before capturing intergenerational immigrants in the solidarity of the public land ethic.

Suarez challenged the group to offer people of color more recreational and educational opportunities. "You've got the best raw material in the world to work with and a customer base that has come across the world to make a home in America."

He drew laughter as he concluded, acknowledging the trials of funding and the need for national support, chiding the group about court decisions on snowmobiling and urging all to remember that new fellow citizens may not love parks and public lands yet, "but they want to . . ."

### Volunteer Work Tops \$200 Million

The value of volunteer work for federal natural resource agencies reached \$200 million in Fiscal Year 2002, according to figures from the Federal Interagency Team on Volunteerism (FITV).

The precise figure—\$211 million—represents the estimated value of work done by volunteers for the eight federal agencies focused on natural and cultural resource management. Those agencies include the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"Volunteers provide a tremendous amount of work on public lands," said Don Hansen, chair of the group and Forest Service representative. Hansen estimates Forest Service volunteers performed duties valued at nearly \$40 million for his agency in 2002. "Volunteers are the unsung heroes of federal lands. They give time and effort that is almost impossible to measure."

Volunteer coordinators at BLM estimate volunteers performed more than 1.2 million hours of public service, estimated at \$20.3 million in value. A recent BLM report estimates the cost of running the volunteer program (about \$1.2 million) produced a return of \$17.48 for each dollar spent. The NPS reports more than 100,000 volunteers help it operate parks and other facilities.

At the U.S. Geological Survey, volunteers help verify mapping projects and perform vital data collection and monitoring efforts. Volunteers for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation help run campgrounds and recreational facilities at many water resources projects, while volunteers help the Fish and Wildlife Service by guiding visitors to refuges around the country. To better coordinate volunteer efforts, FITV members launched [www.volunteer.gov/gov](http://www.volunteer.gov/gov), an on-line recruiting service which lists volunteer opportunities and allows volunteers to submit confidential applications directly to program managers.

# Making Partnerships “Business as Usual”

We in the Fish and Wildlife Service sometimes speak a language all our own; but the word “partnership” is universal throughout the agency. Partnerships are the cornerstone of fish and wildlife conservation.

Our long-established Partners for Fish and Wildlife program has an impressive string of accomplishments, including the Blackfoot Challenge, a long-standing collaborative success story in the Blackfoot River Valley of Montana.

Enhancing the partnerships we have and establishing new ones should be business as usual for the Service. To help accomplish this, I recently expanded the Conservation Partnerships Division. This division will work with all levels of the Service to seek new partnerships, identify new opportunities within existing partnerships, and increase the visibility of these partnerships. I have asked this office to develop new ways to help the Service work even more effectively with its partners.

Hosting conservation forums is one new way we are working with partners. At the National Conservation Training Center in February, the Service held its first conservation forum for representatives of 47 hunting and fishing organizations. A number of specific recommendations for possible future action flowed from this forum. Our partners said the forum succeeded in helping us revitalize our agency’s relationship with them. Building on that success, the Service sponsored a second conservation forum with land trust partners in the fall. Organizations such as the Land Trust Alliance and the Conservation Fund helped identify new opportunities to work with the Service on land acquisition issues. As our population continues to increase, wildlife habitat maintained on farms and ranches becomes increasingly important to conservation. We know if these areas are developed, significant wildlife habitat will be lost forever. That is why we started the “Walk a Mile in My Boots” partnership between the Service and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.



Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams

This agreement with the cattlemen will enable Service employees, ranchers, and farmers to spend real time on each other’s turf, building partnerships to do good things on the ground. One handshake at a time, one acre at a time, working cooperatively with our partners, we can make a real difference for wildlife and habitat for years to come.

*By Steve Williams, Director, U.S.F.W.S.*

---

## Reclamation Commissioner Keys Helps Youth to “Catch a Special Thrill”

Commissioner John W. Keys III, yesterday’s opening plenary session cheerleader, tickled the 1,500 attendees as he recalled the experience of working on a special project of the Bureau of Reclamation.

“Catch a Special Thrill” is a partnership group for disabled and disadvantaged youth. “Who wouldn’t want to get in one of those big honking bass boats?” he laughed, remembering the beaming smiles of young participants and the chance for all of them to have a greater recreational opportunity.

“Catch a Special Thrill” is only one of many recreation-based partnerships heralded by the Bureau throughout its 100-year history. Partnerships also are fundamental to “Water 2025,” a pragmatic approach to an aging water

infrastructure that has been compounded by drought. “Water 2025” looks at four steps for a balanced approach to solve water problems with the best available science, including conservation and a way to “stretch supplies,” collaboration to leverage strengths with cities, counties, states and tribes, technology such as seeking less expensive ways to desalinate, and removing “what we used to call red tape.”

“We’re proud of working with partnerships,” a devotion that is systemic to the Bureau, he said. “This pledge (signed on the first day of the conference by the federal partners) will be a springboard.”

“Take advantage with renewed vigor” of the session and networking opportunities at Joint Ventures,” he urged all participants.



Reclamation Commissioner John W. Keys III

# Diverse Lineup of Speakers Set for Thursday Closing

The third and final day of the Partners in Stewardship conference will feature a diverse lineup of dynamic speakers ranging from a former professional football player to the son of the special Watergate prosecutor.

Rebecca W. Watson, Assistant Interior Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, is scheduled to talk about partnerships being forged by the bureaus she oversees—Bureau of Land Management, Minerals Management Service and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, three federal agencies with unique, controversial, and complex mandates.

---

**All too frequently, litigation does not solve the on-the-ground issues, and the environment and communities suffer.**

---

Watson, a prominent Montana lawyer specializing in natural resource and environmental issues before joining the Bush Administration, said in her prepared speech that one of her top priorities is to integrate Interior Secretary Gale Norton's 4 Cs—consultation, communication, cooperation, and conservation—into the way bureaus conduct business in the 21st century.

"We now have 40 years experience with environmental laws. What experience has taught many of us is that court-ordered land management is not a panacea. All too frequently, litigation does not solve the on-the-ground issues, and the environment and communities suffer," she says.

Another speaker in the Thursday morning plenary is Joseph Jaworski, a management consultant and author of the book *Synchronicity*. Jaworski, found-



Assistant Interior Secretary Rebecca W. Watson

ing partner of Generon Consulting, is the son of Leon Jaworski, who gained fame as the special prosecutor during the Watergate scandal of the early 1970s.

Rounding out the morning plenary will be Mark Rey, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and John Nau, Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Afternoon remarks include insights from William Mehojah, Jr., Deputy Bureau Director of Tribal Services for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tom Melius, Assistant Director for External Affairs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Thursday afternoon will bring the closing plenary of the conference. Keynote speaker for the afternoon session will be Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who will talk about the partnership behind the McGraw Ranch Research Center in Colorado.

The finale of the conference will feature Gene Washington, Director of Operations for the National Football League. The former player for the San Francisco 49ers and the Detroit Lions is now a member of the National Park Foundation Board of Directors.

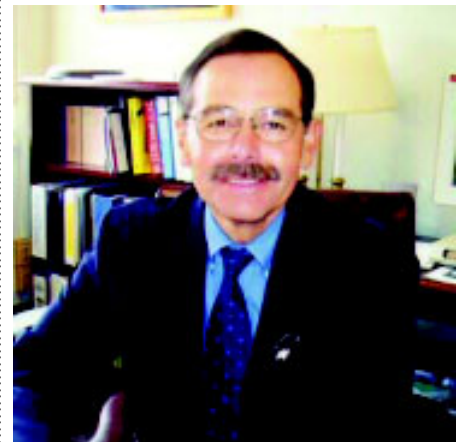
## Inspire Vision But Remain Balanced in Reality, Says BIA Spokesman Mehojah

"For Native Americans the land threads through every facet of our lives, it is the essence of our very existence, it runs through our veins, is recognized as primordial to our being—it is from whence we come and must be held sacred forever."

This was the message in a speech prepared for delivery at the Partners in Stewardship conference by William Mehojah, Jr., Deputy Director of the Office of Tribal Services for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Mehojah, a member of the Kaw Tribe of Oklahoma and winner of the National Indian Education Association "Educator of the Year" award remarked, "We must inspire our colleagues to get informed, get involved and get invested. We must clarify the facts and issues, then we must educate in order to enable and advocate for change."

Mehojah said Native Americans depend on their youth to carry on the partnerships pledged by seven federal agencies sponsoring the Partners in Stewardship gathering. "We can inspire vision and still remain balanced in reality—we have a personal responsibility to do so," he said.

He quoted Chief Oren Lyons: "It seems we are living in a time of prophecies, a time of definitions and decisions. We are the generations with the responsibility and option to choose the path of life with a future for our children or the life and the path that defies the laws of regeneration. Even though you and I are in different boats—you in your boat and we in our canoe—we share the same river of life. What befalls me, befalls you. And downstream, downstream in this river of life, our children will pay for our selfishness, for our greed and for our lack of vision."



Deputy Bureau Director William Mehojah, Jr.



# Students Plan Fire Mitigation Model

A wildfire threatening your home—or that of your friends and neighbors—isn't just something you read about in the morning paper or see on the evening news if you live in places like Montrose, Colorado. It's a reality of everyday life for several months of the year.

Mitigation of the threat in the wildland/urban interface requires a combination of partnerships and personal responsibility—lessons several teachers at Centennial Junior High School believed would be valuable for some of their students. Funded by a grant from GreenWorks!, an environmental education and community action program of the American Forest Foundation's Project Learning Tree, the idea was to have the students apply classroom skills in complex problem solving. After classroom preparation by the Montrose Interagency Fire Education Specialist, the Colorado State Forest Service District Forester, and the Montrose County Sheriff's Department, 70 students took an all-day field trip to a subdivision. There they gathered infor-



Centennial Junior High students use posters and stick houses to demonstrate fire mitigation.

mation on topics including weather, topography, fuels, and home protection. Upon returning to school, they developed a fire mitigation plan for one of the residences and presented their findings through either a web page, news article, public presentation, or school presentation.

Twenty-five states and nearly 2,100 teachers will participate in the BLM-funded Project Learning Tree fire initiative during the coming year to increase community involvement in fire-related activities and link students to existing, ongoing community networks that work for healthy ecosystems.

## Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship

On the Internet at [www.partnerships2003.org](http://www.partnerships2003.org)

### Executive Editor

John Quinley - Assistant Regional Director, Public Affairs, NPS Alaska Region

### Managing Editor

Paul Winegar - Public Information Officer, NPS Southeast Region

### Design and Production

Diane Liggett - Communications Specialist, NPS Harpers Ferry Center

### Senior Correspondent

Al Nash - Public Affairs Specialist, NPS Office of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.

### Correspondents

Holly Bundock - Assistant Regional Director for Communications, NPS Pacific West Region

William Line - Assistant Regional Director for Communications, National Capital Region

Nancy Upham - Public Affairs Specialist, U.S. Forest Service, Inyo National Forest

### Photographer

Tami A. Heilemann - Photographer to the Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

*Printed on 50% recycled paper using vegetable-based inks.*

## Madsen Recalls Public Lands Journey

A journey from Canada to Mexico, some 3,000 miles trekked entirely on our nation's public lands, was the amazing partnership story shared at the Wednesday morning plenary session by Lisa Madsen, Executive Director of the Public Lands Interpretive Association.

"Public lands are my passion, and partnerships are something that I do every day," Madsen said as she described the adventure known as American Frontiers: A Public Lands Journey. Her enthusiasm for this project was obvious as she described the partnership of some 60 public and private organizations. The project involved a group of trekkers who crossed high mountains, low deserts, wilderness, and rivers for 60 days, talking to ranchers, environmentalists, land managers, lease holders, county commissioners, and citizens. They talked about wildfires, the effects of mining, healthy

forests, and the challenges facing our public lands and nearby communities. According to Madsen, the project "is an impressive educational effort playing itself out on the Internet, and in classrooms and auditoriums throughout the country." Through the Geography Alliance, schools across the nation were able to interact with the trekkers via the Internet.

Over the course of the three-year project, 200 individuals were involved by phone, Internet, and in person-to-person meetings in offices and in the field. Madsen characterized the endeavor as a partnership of champions who believed so strongly in what they were doing that they would not accept failure as an option. They shared one great thing in common and that was a love for America's public lands.